

Minutes of Meeting June 18, 2008

Warren Senior Center, Warren

In attendance: Pegée Malcolm, Judy Fardig, Sally Small, Bruce MacGunnigle, Paul Robinson, Robert Butler, Lee Teverow

Excused Absences: Evelyn Wheeler, David Kirchner, Carolyn Crist-Schwab, Edna Kent, Roger Beaudry

Meeting called to order at 6:47 pm by Pegée Malcom, Co-Chair

Recommendation by Pegée Malcolm that the Meeting Minutes include Commission

Members who are excused from the meetings

Introduction of Minutes of February 27, 2008 Work Session by Pegée Malcolm

Motion to accept minutes by Robert Butler, second by Judy Fardig

7 – 0 to accept minutes

Introduction of Minutes of April 30, 2008 by Pegée Malcom

Motion to accept minutes by Lee Teverow, second by Robert Butler

7 – 0 to accept minutes

Any cemetery signs that are on order are on hold as “non-essential” – may know more after July 1st

Narragansett and Cranston are in the process of starting Cemetery Commissions – volunteers are needed to approach the remaining towns/cities: Providence, North Providence, North Smithfield, Foster, Richmond, Woonsocket, Scituate, Jamestown, Lincoln, and Newport

Steps to register new or found cemeteries

- 1. “New” or “found” cemetery is reported to Commission member**
- 2. Member contacts Roger Beaudry or John Sterling with information including GPS, stones, etc... to verify “new” or “found”**
- 3. New number given if really a “new” cemetery, or an old one “found”**
- 4. Member notifies Town Clerk, Planner, and Assessor with particulars to that the town/city can register the cemetery**

**Bruce MacGunnigle suggested that notification of the City/Town Public Works Dept
be added**

Report by Pegée Malcolm on the status of the remains found in the basement of the Potowomut home

- 1. The Forensic Anthropologist determined that the remains are of a female, of African descent, approximately 40 – 70 years old, approximately 4’11” to 5’2”, who died between 1850 and 1900**
- 2. PAL conducted a survey of the area outside the home that was to be the location of the garage, but not the basement itself**
- 3. The forensic anthropologist’s findings, as well as the findings of**

the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission could not rule out that there were additional bones of the woman found, or additional burials, in the basement

4. The homeowner, despite his original stated intentions, has sealed up the basement area in concrete

5. Pegee Malcolm, for the Warwick Historical Cemetery Commission, has contacted multiple City departments, as well as the Mayor, in an attempt to insure that the remainder of the basement be excavated to locate any additional bones that may be there

6. Various donations have been made for a grave, plaque, etc... to bury the remains

7. Pegee Malcolm has also conducted a title search, and death records, in an attempt to identify the woman, but has been unable to do so

8. Suggestions from the Commission members that the Forensic Anthropologist and RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission's written reports be entered into the city record so that the homeowner will need to finish excavation

9. Pegee Malcolm will request that the City Solicitor attend the July meeting of the Warwick Historical Cemetery Commission

10. General discussion that the attitudes of state and local governments, as well as how this impacts the public's attitudes regarding respect for human remains

Sally Small recommended that the procedure that individuals/companies should follow if remains are found on their

property be posted on the Commission's website to assist people in knowing what to do

1. RIGL 23-18-11 specifies the procedure

2. Paul Robinson offered to distribute a document from the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission to commission members for review to see if it would be helpful information to post on the website

Lee Teverow discussed the fact that the computer at the RI Historical Society that has the database on it is not going to last much longer, and that the DOS database only runs on Windows 95, so will need to be converted if a new computer is purchased

1. Discussion that Kenneth Rahn is currently working on converting the database, but the scope and status of the project is not known
2. Suggestion by Commission members that Kenneth Rahn be invited to the next Commission meeting to update members

Bruce MacGunnigle discussed an out-of-state ancestor of one of EG's Historical Cemeteries has a meeting scheduled at the Town Hall the following day. She is insisting that her ancestor's cemetery be re-numbered to be 10. Mr. MacGunnigle did extensive research on the history of the cemetery, and prepared a report to be attached to the minutes

Pegee Malcolm announced that the Route 37 reburial is scheduled for June 24th – June 27th at Knight Street State Institution Cemetery.

Pegee Malcolm discussed that the Cemetery Commission has an Intern, through the Secretary of State, who is working on recording GPS coordinates under Evelyn Wheeler, Chairwoman's direction

Sally Small discussed that the next phase of grave restoration, for slate markers, has been coordinated by the Barrington Historical Cemetery Commission for August 18th – 22nd

Motion to close meeting at 8 pm and begin Open Forum by Robert Butler, second by Judy Fardig

Two members of the Tiverton Historical Cemetery Commission discussed that the Newport Daily News published an extensive story today regarding member Isobel Hart completed project to create and place concrete footstones for 63 identified burials in the pauper cemetery adjacent to the Tiverton Town Hall

Motion to adjourn at 8:15 by Bruce MacGunnigle, second by Robert Butler. Voted 7 – 0 to adjourn.

Next Meeting: September 17th at 6:30 pm at the West Greenwich Town Hall

Respectfully submitted by Emily Corbett